

Kathmandu -- The National Democratic Institute (NDI) will hold a five-day workshop on 'Effective Legislative Practices' from Nov. 23 - 27, 2009 to provide a platform for women Constituent Assembly (CA) members/parliamentarians to discuss comparative governmental and electoral systems and federalism options currently under discussion in the CA. The workshop expects to raise the level of awareness of the participants on these issues and enhance their parliamentary skills through interaction.

Approximately 60 women CA members from more than eight political parties representing a wide cross section of ethnic and regional affiliations will attend the workshop. There will be more than 15 national and international experts/resource persons who will facilitate the discussions during specific thematic sessions on each of the five days. The international experts bring their knowledge and experiences from various countries such as Germany, Belgium, Brazil, UK, Canada and US. The workshop, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), will be held at the Hotel Yak & Yeti, Durbarmarg, Kathmandu, from 7:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. each day. The workshop will also help participants analyze discussions from a woman's vantage point.

The workshop is a component of the Women's Leadership Academy (WLA), established last July with funding provided by USAID. The WLA strives to help women leaders participate in governance by building and strengthening their political knowledge and skills, particularly in the constitution drafting process, public speaking, advocacy, and policy development. To date, over 170 women including 102 CA members have participated in the WLA.

Dr. Kevin A. Rushing, Director of USAID/Nepal, remarked, "It is our hope that this workshop will provide the tools CA members need to draft the constitution and participate fully in party and parliamentary proceedings. In the past, through the Women's Leadership Academy, we have provided trainings on topics such as federalism, the constitution drafting process, parliamentary culture, political communication, policy development, budgetary planning, community dialogue, and constituency services."